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EL SATANICO WINS IN A SHOCKER IN TOKYO KEEPS NWA WORLD LIGHT HEAVY TITLE Defeats el Ultimo Dragon at Tokyo Coliseum

Hometown favorite Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon (Yoshihiro Asai) was upset by el Satanico (Jose Daniel Lopez Lopez) two falls to one via count out of the ring in the third fall and failed to win the NWA World Light Heavyweight Championship in a match held Saturday, April 18, 1992, at The Tokyo Coliseum in Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan. Asai, who, when he jumped from the UWA promotion to the CMLL promotion back on September 30, 1991, signed the largest contract (in monetary measure) of any foreign wrestler in Mexican wrestling history, thus failed to become the 48th NWA World Light Heavyweight Champion, dating back to 1957.

The match itself, first reported in the U. S. A. in Dave Meltzer's *The Wrestling Observer Newsletter* this week, was said to have been really bad. I will have more details on the match itself, and the whole SWS tour that Dragon, Naoki Sano, Satanico, and CHavo Guerrero had, in next week's issue. Thanks to Dave for his help and kindness in helping me with this story.

The CMLL returned to la Arena Coliseo on Friday, April 10, 1992, for a television taping that aired here in the U. S. A. on Galavision on Sunday, April 17. The production standards of this show are way up this year from the past. The graphics are newer, more modern, and smoother; the editing is far far better (less choppy); the announcing of all the announcers but Doctor Alfonso Morales has become much more focused and serious (Morales still gets wound up like Jim Ross a lot); the intros and exits are fresher, too; and the close-ups and camera work is much improved. Really, this show finally takes its place at near the technical level of the US and Japanese weekly shows, and considering the other shows I see on Galavision, this is probably their finest produced show. Once you add in the fact that (so far) this has been their best year in the ring on their TV show as well, this show ranks now with All Japan and New Japan, in my opinion (unbiased OF COURSE) as one of the best three wrestling shows I see. They do, however, need to mike the crowd better...

The match off television this week, according to *Ovaciones* newspaper, saw Akira (Akira Hokuto) and Mita (Etsuko Mita) from the All Japan Women's Professional Wrestling promotion defeat Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales and Xochitl Hamada. The Mexican tecnicas asked for a rematch and they are the opening match on next week's TV card. The segunda will be the midgets. So once again I am torn as to which match I'd rather see; but the midgets will be around a lot longer so I think I'd rather see the ladies.

The card opener was the television opener and marked the television debut of a new, heavily-pushed trio for the CMLL, los Guerreros Mayas. They consist of el Guerrero Maya (Esteban Mares, ex-Black Terry), el Guerrero del Futuro (Jose Luis Feliciano), and a non-masked man who resembles in a way The Exotic Adrian Street called Damian, el Guerrero. Los Guerreros defeated los Metalicos Olimpicos, who consist of Oro, Plata, and Bronce (Bronce used to be la Mascara, that's the last time I'll say that I think), in three falls in 19:23. The first fall saw Oro pinned in 6:17 by the two masked Guerreros after Oro was dropped from a press slam onto Damian's two feet. The second fall saw Oro and Bronce hit big dives on the two masked Guerreros, who were then counted out of the ring at 4:01. The third fall went 9:05 before Oro did a "tope suicida" through the second and third ropes and hit his partner Plata by mistake, resulting in Oro and Plata's being counted out of the ring. Oro busted his nose up legit on this dive. This was really fine lucha libre and a good way to introduce los Guerreros Mayas. They worked well and in fact the teams worked together very well. Sometimes they worked so well together that I was amazed, as since los Guerreros Mayas debuted about three weeks ago or so, I have not seen them matched up in any "cartelera" (list of matches) against los Metalicos anywhere. It almost makes me think that, as so often is the case, that the masked Guerreros are actually wrestlers who have wrestled on CMLL TV before but have worn out their gimmick or need a new one and television producer Antonio Pena has come up with this idea. This is exactly what he did in making la Mascara into Bronce, for example. This "redesigning" characters works more often than not for Pena. ** 1/2

By the way, I should add that at the top of the show, after the introduction, they showed clips of el Satanico winning the NWA World Light Heavyweight Championship from Lizmark on a card held Sunday, April 5, 1992, at la Arena Mexico. The finish was undramatic but a clean pinfall, as Lizmark went for a Mexican-roll-up rana, and Satanico blocked it for a cradle pin. About 3:00 aired. What was most striking was how sparsely filled the arena was--only the first few rows of ringside were filled.

Also, early on, they gave us this week's "Cartometro" popularity poll. Off their hot movie, Octagon and Atlantis were 1-2 on the tecnico side; Blue Panther and la Fiera were 1-2 rudos; Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales and Xochitl Hamada were 1-2 damas; la Mascarita Sagrada and Octagoncito were 1-2 super-mini-estrellas; los Intocables del Ring and los Mosqueteros del Diablo/los Brazos were 1-2 trios. The big news of the week was Love Machine's illegal tombstone and the dive of the week was la Fiera's over-the-top-rope tope suicida diving head butt onto Atlantis.

The second TV card was the third of the night at the arena. The team of el Filoso, Koga (SWS wrestler Takayuki Nakahara) and captain Iga (SWS wrestler Masao Orihara) lost to Vandal Drummond's favorite trio team of los Nuevos Destructores del Ring (Rocco Valente, his brother Tony Arce, and captain el Vulcano) two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 14:29. The first fall went 8:02 before Iga pinned Valente with the german suplex hold. The second went 2:22 before Vulcano pinned Iga with a bouncing off-the-ropes triple-team-aided backward splash dive. The third went 4:05 before Iga submitted to a all-body-parts-stretched submission hold put on by all three rudissimo rudos. This was also good, though not as spectacular as I had expected. Considering that Iga and el Filoso both do las quebradas (moonsault bodyblock outside of the ring) from off of the top rope, it was disappointing to see neither do one. I had been expecting that Iga and Koga would not be up to speed on the lucha libre style based on Erick "el Canelo" Casas's popping off on them last week at la Arena Coliseo for that reason. To my pleasant surprise, they looked fine, and Iga especially has settled into his character. I would not at all be surprised to see SWS use Orihara and Nakahara as Iga and Koga when they return to SWS; since Osamu Matsuda gets over in New Japan rings as el Samuray and Asai as el Ultimo Dragon in SWS rings, I suspect this is a growing trend. I should add to that last sentence the "if there still is an SWS by the time they return" clause they way things are going in Japan now. As Kurt Brown reminds me, the rudo-trio-mayhem that los Nuevos Destructores do, all running into each other a la the Three Stooges, is very difficult to do and takes an enormous amount of practice. Perhaps only someone like another wrestler or someone who spends a ton of hours in the gyms practicing moves can realize at what a high level this team does their spots, and all to make the other guy look good, not them. **

The semifinal saw La Mano Negra, la Mascara Sagrada, and captain Atlantis defeat the rudo dream team of Fuerza Guerrera, Jerry "el Puma" Estrada, and Emilio "el Rey del Beautiful" CHARLES junior two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 19:12. The rudos all pinned Atlantis after a foul at 6:56 to win the first fall. The second fall went 5:36 before la Mano Negra pinned Guerrera after a beautiful tope en reversa (diving backwards head butt). That was one of the best dives I have seen Negra, who is listed at 41 but looks older with white/gray chest hair already, do in a long, long time. The third fall went 3:38 before Atlantis made his oldest rival CHARLES submit to his quebradora (backbreaker) submission hold a la the torture rack. This was really good, and the best match of the night, but considering the rudo talent, might have been even better. I am reminded that Atlantis has held the NWA World Middleweight Championship since August 1, 1980. That in Mexico is a long time to hold any one single belt, so I expect him to drop it before too long. Of Atlantis's 32 title defenses, more have come against CHARLES than against anyone else; and, I would not at all be surprised to see CHARLES be the one to take the belt away. It won't happen on TV that's for sure. With all the money Televisa has invested in Atlantis and Octagon and their five-movie-deal, no way should they let Atlantis lose a stipulation (mask, hair, title, etc.) match on television. But the title will change pretty soon. Everyone looked fine here, although how can Estrada work as he does with a long dangling earring in one ear? And does that expose the business? Not that this style with all its extreme co-operation required doesn't take a lot of suspension of disbelief in the first place. Anyway this match was good, but nothing super. *** 1/2.

Next up was an interview with head CMLL referee Roberto "el Guero" Rangel. Rangel, in his 28th year of refereeing for the empresa, was specifically asked by interviewer Raul Sarmiento why he had disqualified The Love Machine for using a tombstone piledriver ("el martinete") when the week before he had allowed one by la Fiera on Konnan el Barbaro. I spoke with Carlos Rey from Hialeah, Florida, who does the lucha libre column in Alex Marvez's excellent Three Count Professional Wrestling Newsletter, and Rey told me that Rangel's answer essentially was that he had not seen it the week before; that while he was referee that hold is illegal and he will not allow it but the week before he missed it. This is an extraordinary answer to those of us who have videotapes of the 3/27 show, as Rangel is looking right at the move as it is done (so is second ref el Gato Montini) and nobody calls for a DQ. Rey thinks, and I suspect he's right, that the Mexico City fan will buy this explanation by Rangel, and maybe more so since so few have a video tape machine to view the la Fiera move. I take it from the fact they even asked this question on TV that there must have been one hell of an uproar in the newspapers and magazines about such a ridiculously oneap and really inexplicable finish. As I get to look at the magazines, I'll let you know in the next couple of weeks just what kind of reaction there was.

The main event for television saw la Fiera (Arturo Casco Poblano) captain a team of himself, el Espectro de Ultratumba (ex-el Gran Cochisse, substituting for the "injured" Blue Panther), and el Satanico (Jose Daniel Lopez Lopez) to a victory in three falls over The Love Machine (Arthur James Barr), Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon (Yoshihiro Asai), and captain Black Magic (Norman Smiley) in a total elapsed time of 1:1:53. The first fall went only 2:10 before Ultratumba pinned Dragon with an ultra-slow cradle hold. The second went 4:24 before Magic pinned Fiera with the german suplex hold (which he didn't hold all the way through, as if Magic had hurt his head when he snapped the move on back to the mat). The third fall went 5:19 before Fiera picked Magic up for an atomic knee drop but straddled Magic instead on the top ropes for a foul and then covered for the pinfall win. This finish sets up the main event singles match next week between Fiera and Magic. This was a strange match all around. Barr, who wants to get over as a face, attacked Panther, who was wearing a neck brace and is already extremely popular, before the match. That's about the worst thing I can think of that Barr could do if he's trying to get over as a face. I almost wonder if Barr wasn't ordered to do that. Anyway, the fans booed Barr a lot for this. Then Fiera used his chain to hand Black Magic and punch him in the head. Fiera still gets some heat but I don't believe as the promotion wants me too that he is the second most over heel in the promotion. Actually if he's not careful Art Barr will be soon. This was a fair match, in my opinion, but nothing to write home about, so I won't be sending Mom and Dad any letters this week. Magic is fine in this style and must be happy to finally be back on TV, and in a pushed role, after being off since September. Satanico and Dragon did not have many spots together in this match but the ones they did they looked fine together in, and I'll bet their matches in Japan were fine. Satanico can have really good matches with "complete" wrestlers (like el Dandy and Jerry Estrada) who are equally adept on offense and defense, and Dragon is as solid as anybody in the CMLL roster. And will somebody please explain why Art Barr wears that huge lift in his right shoe? It's becoming absolutely hilarious to look at. ** 1/2 Oh, one other thing. What was the purpose of spending a little over 11:00 of air time after this match showing the post-match pushing and shoving? I'm asking you because I can't figure it out. I'd rather have seen the Japanese women, but maybe we'll see them this week.

I now have some miscellaneous housekeeping chores to go over:

TAPES: For those of you who asked about trading for the UWA tapes, or CMLL tapes, or luchadores en Japon, I am serious that I will trade or just be a copy service. Just write me or call me and I'll be glad to work something out that's more than fair to both sides.

ANNUAL: If there's anyone left who wants one, at \$10, I still can do. There haven't been orders lately, so this will be the last "plug" for this.

MAGAZINE TRADE: This is for those of you who live in the Los Angeles area. You lucky folks get *Box y Lucha* and *Super Luchas* magazines far earlier than anywhere else in the USA (by 7-10 days). As this newsletter is taking off, I am interested in working out a trade, or a purchase, or whatever. Anyone who goes by a news stand that sells those magazines (I believe that he downtown L. A. like Broadway and 4th get them on Thursday nights and the suburbs out to Santa Ana etc. by Saturday or Sunday) I'd be *VERY* interested in working something out. I would like to receive copies of either one (well, especially *Box y Lucha*) to make this newsletter even more complete.

TRIP NEWS: Many readers have responded with an interest in going to Mexico City, although at different times. I would like to go on each trip with each one of you, but neither my time or my finances will permit it. I am in the process of deciding which times to go. What I would like is that anyone who is interested in going let me know within the next couple of weeks that you are and what weekend would be best for you. So far, the majority of those I have talked with say that the September 18, 1992 weekend is fine with them. Others have suggested the first weekend in June, the last weekend in June, and early August as preferred times. I will try and match people up together by interested time, so if I, for example, can not go one weekend but four of you can, then I would put the four of you in touch with each other. Mexico City is a very easy place to get around in (even if you do not speak Spanish, though it surely helps). Once one gets out of the airport the first time, it is all downhill from there. I also have addresses of the arenas, promotions, gyms, hotels, mask factories, museums, etc., from my two trips, and I love talking about my trips, so anyone who wants to chat about anything related to attractions, accommodations, or whatever, can just write me or call me. By the way, for those of you in California and Nevada, FMW, which employs several luchadores, has announced two dates in your area. They have stated that they will be in Tijuana, presumably at el Auditorio Municipal, on Thursday, May 15, 1992, and will have a card "in Los Angeles" (that could mean a suburb I guess) on Friday, May 16, 1992. I take it (this is an assumption but a logical one) that Benjamin Mora junior will be the booking agent (i. e., he is the one responsible for finding the building to run) for the L. A. show just like he is for the TJ show, so those of you who have been to Mora Promotions shows in the SE California area before, I would guess those would be likely sites for the show of the 16th. Though the dates have been specifically announced in Japan, the sites have not, so maybe there is more than meets the eye to this story. To sum up, if you have any questions about a pilgrimage to Mexico City, tapes, masks, the annual, or whatever, just call or write. I'm always happy to talk to everybody.

Two other housekeeping notes. First, many of you have written or called me and said that your issues are arriving at all different times during the week. This week (and this week only unless it works) I am trying an experiment and mailing them all in envelopes like a personal letter. PLEASE let me know if this improves your delivery or arrival date. For those getting a sample issue, normally this sheet is eight pages and is mailed out Tuesday afternoons from the main post office in downtown Chicago. This week there is an extra two pages to allow for the Light Heavyweight Title Histories listing. Second, because the late news came in late to my store today (Tuesday) this is going out a little later (5:00 pm CDT 4/21) than normal. Now on to the late news.

LATE NEWS: Here are the results from the UWA card held Sunday, April 19, 1992, from 5:00 pm - about 8:00 pm local time, at el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos, the 17th century bull ring in Naucalpan, state of Mexico, Mexico, just outside Mexico City: The main event saw the return of Andree el Gigante (Andree Jean Rousimoff), as he teamed with Rambo (Jose Luis "Pepito" Mendieta junior) and Bam Bam Bigelow (Scott Bigelow) to defeat the team of el Villano III (Arturo Diaz), el Villano V (? Diaz), and Canek (S?. Estrada) two falls to zero. The first fall was pretty short before Bigelow, Canek, el Villano V, and Rambo started all brawling outside the ring. That left Andree in with el Villano III and Andree got a clean pinfall with the most awesome looking of wrestling finishing hold, the elbow drop. The second fall went much longer before, behind the referee's back, Bigelow fouled V-III, and in turn, V-III returned the favor and fouled Bigelow. This the referees (el Fresero and el Bucles) saw and they disqualified the Mexican tecnicos. After the match, V-III, who had had his mask pretty well ripped to shreds by Andree, lit into the referees and punched the both of them. Then, on the mike, Canek challenged both Andree and Bigelow to a singles match next week. I guess he couldn't challenge Bigelow to either a mask or a hair match, could he? As of press time, neither challenge had yet been accepted. This was not said to have been a good match.

The semifinal was said to be the best match of the night, and wait until you hear about the finish! The team of los Cowboys (el Texano and Silver King) teamed with Mike Lozansky (el Tigre Canadiense) to defeated los Cazadores del Cabezas (The Head Hunters A and B) and Fishman two falls to one. Originally I had been told this would be a tag-team title match, but it didn't turn out that way. The rudos (Fishman's team) won the first fall but the tecnicos won the last two, the third and final fall victory being by disqualification. How you ask? Well, one of the Head Hunters was disqualified for **DELIVERING A TOMBSTONE PILEDRIVER** to el Texano. Maybe Texano is showing some sympathy for his friend and fellow Norteno The Blue Panther. El Texano sold it to the hilt, being stretchered and "taken to the hospital" immediately after the blow was delivered.

The rest of the card went as follows: the tercera saw los Nuevos Misioneros de la Muerte (The Black Power II, Miguel "el Negro" Navarro, and el Signo) won a non-title match (Misioneros are UWA Trios champs) over el Fantasma, el Villano I, and el Villano IV, in what was said to be a good match, as the Misioneros won the first and third falls. The segunda saw a double foul draw in the third fall as Super Raton, (Super) Pinochio, and el Sicodelico drew with el Scorpio I, el Scorpio junior, and Casandro when el Scorpio I fouled Pinochio, and el Sicodelico fouled Scorpio back for revenge. The opener saw Katana and el Celstial win two out of three from el Gran Petroneo, who was substituting for Momotaro (Monkey Magic Wakita), whose plane did not make it back from Tokyo in time, and Ricky Boy. The **Ovaciones** contest for Ricky Boy (his fans can write in and win a trip to Acapulco) ends Monday the 20th. By the way, re the finish of the main event, that was the proper time to use the foul/DQ finish to set up a main event match for the next week. Next week is the last date in for Bigelow and Andree and I believe the Head Hunters's last day in was the 19th, so these guys are total out of foreigners to put Canek and the boys over with.

As far as late CMLL news, I have just the result of the main event from the card Sunday, April 19, 1992, at la Arena Coliseo in Mexico City, Distrito Federal, Mexico. There, Atlantis, Anibal (Carlos Ignacio y Carillo), and The Love Machine (Arthur James Barr) defeated The Blue Panther, Fuerza Guerrera, and Jerry "el Puma" Estrada (Gerardo Hernandez Estrada) two falls to one. Panther pinned Atlantis to win the first fall (cleanly I might add). Love Machine got a win with a nudo (leg entangle) and pinfall over Fuerza Guerrera in the second fall. The third went pretty much the tecnicos's way as Atlantis and Anibal pinned Guerrera and Estrada, respectively, with simultaneous estrellas (sunset flips). Before the match started, Panther, in his first match back against Machine since the mask match of 16 days earlier, attacked Barr and the paper noted the cheers were intense for Panther and for Mexico, few for Barr.

STRONG CUSTODIA MAGAZINE STORY CALLS WRESTLING UNION 'MAFIOSO'

In its April 28, 1992 issue, **Custodia** magazine, one of the multitude of Mexican tabloid magazines, printed an article that was headlined "El Mafioso Sindicato De Luchadores Que Maneja Para Su Beneficio Manny Guzman." Guzman, real name Manuel Solano Vazquez, is the head of the wrestlers'/referees' wing of the wrestling/boxing union. This is a difficult story to go into. A very reliable source has indicated to me (in a chat we had last year) things that would bear out the truth of a lot of these charges. It seems likely that part of the money invested into the union as well as invested out has circulation in the Mexican underworld. And there is considerable discontent with Guzman, that the union is more for his benefit than for the wrestlers. Also, many CMLL wrestlers feel strongly that the union is too UWA-biased. Most UWA officers are UWA guys. But much of what I hear is gossip, so I'll shy away from more.

UWA NEWS: The biggest UWA news is the return of Andree el Gigante for his third and likely final tour of Mexico. His first match is Sunday, April 19, 1992 at el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos bull ring in Naucalpan, Mexico, as Andree teams up with Bam Bam Bigelow and Rambo to face Canek, el Villano III, and el Villano V. Then on Monday the 20th, Andree teams up with Rambo and Fishman to face Enrique Vera, V-III, and V-V. After that, Andree will be at la Arena Queretaro on the 21st, el Palenque de la Feria in Celaya, Guanajuato on the 22nd, la Pista Arena Revolucion on the 23rd, la Arena Netzahualcoyotl for a TV taping on the 24th, la Arena Isabel in Cuyernavaca, Morelos on the 25th, and wrapping up Sunday the 26th with the el Toreo card. He is scheduled to team up with Bigelow every match except maybe the last one; Bigelow was supposed to leave on the 26th and they are trying to get him to extend his stay by a few more hours....A sad note is the apparent retirement of Katana (Leon CHino) from the Mexico City mat wars. Based on a little past research and a couple of phone calls, I have concluded that it's likely CHino has returned home to Tijuana. He had worked in Mexico City in the late 1980s and did in fact quit abruptly due to homesickness and returned to T.J. The UWA promotion took the unusual step of announcing through the papers that a new masked man called "Shogun" would be taking Katana's place in the trio of Los Nuevos Fantásticos (alongside Blackman II and Kendo Star)....*Peligro* magazine in its April 14 issue published an article noting how lucha libre (read between the lines they mean the UWA) was in serious trouble because of declining attendance. Now while I don't have exact figures, the attendance as judged by TV for the CMLL at las Arenas Mexico and Coliseo seems to indicate they are doing far better houses than the UWA at "Neza" or el Toreo. The UWA has slipped further than any promotion except the 1985-1988 NWA in recent years and appears to have no solid idea as how to get back on track....Finally, for those fans like David Scherer of MARMORA, New Jersey, who watch the UWA on satellite, here is the upcoming TV schedule: The show to air Saturday, April 25, 1992, was taped 4/17/92 at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl. The main event had Rambo, el Signo, and Bam Bam Bigelow versus Canek, Rambo, and Fishman (look for Canek to run Bigelow out of town here more or less because next week Canek's got to run Andree out of town on TV). The semifinal has a non-title matchup between UWA/WWA World/UWF Intercontinental Parejas Champions los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano) versus The Head Hunters. The tercera will have Fishman, The Killer (with Andy Barrow), and Doctor Wagner junior versus Enrique Vera, el Villano IV, and el Fantasma. The segunda has Lasser and el Gran Apache I versus los Mohicanos I and II, although M-I is injured and may not be back in time. The opener has Takeda versus el Migra. THEN, the TV show after that, to air Saturday, May 2, 1992, will be taped 4/24/92, and will be the only TV match ever I'm sure where Andree el Gigante teamed up with Bam Bam Bigelow and a Mexican (Fishman? Rambo?) to face Canek, el Villano III, and either el Villano V, Dos Caras, or Enrique Vera in the main event.

CMLL NEWS: Speaking of television tapings, the Galavision show to air Sunday, April 26, 1992, in the US, was taped 4/17/92 in Mexico City at la Arena Coliseo. The main event, based off this week's main event finish had Black Magic (Norman Smiley) in a Barry-Rose-dream-match mana-a-mano versus la Fiera. The semifinal had those three flyers la Mascara Sagrada, Lizmark, and Salomon Grondy in a non-title tilt with los Inotcables del Ring (CMLL World Trios Champions Masakre, Pierroth junior, and Jaque Mate). The tercera has los Mosqueteros del Diablo, los Brazos (el Brazo, el Brazo de Oro, and el Brazo de Plata) versus el Volador, el Misterioso, and el Angel Azteca. The super-mini-estrellas are on second with tecnicos Octagoncito, el Misteriosito, and CMLL World Champion la Mascarita Sagrada to take on el Espectrito (junior), el Piratita Morgan, and el Pequeno Pierroth. And in the inicial, Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales and Xochitl Hamada seek revenge for their loss the previous Friday to Akira (Akira Hokuto) and Mita (Etsuko Mita). Maybe this week the ladies will be on TV. If the opener does not air on Galavision 4/26 it would have aired on the Saturday night show on 4/18. One of the Japanese magazines reported that the CMLL would return to la Arena Mexico on April 29, but I don't think so--that's a Wednesday. I still think the next big series at la Arena Mexico will begin in late May. Also, *Weekly Pro Wrestling* in Japan reports the 4/3 mask match card sold out la Arena Mexico (capacity according to the promotion is 17,100) with over 1,000 fans turned away at the door....Konnan el Barbaro did not retire after all; he is merely working circuits in the interior of the country for a while....The Octagon and Atlantis movie "La Revancha" finally shows some sign of slippage in its fifth week in circulation. Nonetheless it's done very well, but I'm guilty of negligence in telling you why. The producers of this film (i. e., the money behind the film) is "Televisine," the movie-making arm of "Televisa," the leading television network(s) in Mexico. Televisa, which owns 4 of the 6 commercial network franchises in Mexico (imagine having 4 ABCs along with 1 CBS and 1 NBC in the US before cable and you've got the idea) and --key point here-- Televisa has been flooding its TV day and night with ads for the movie. Dave Meltzer always credited WWF TV for the first-few-week success of "No Holds Barred," and to borrow a cliché, this is the exact same thing only more so....On a related note, if this movie is not already showing in the Hispanic areas of Los Angeles, it will be soon, according to the newspapers, and it will be out on video by the time of the 59th lucha libre anniversary card to be held 9/18/92. It may even be available in USA Hispanic video stores by then....One big title match of note this weekend: Cien Caras defended his CMLL World Heavyweight Championship for the fourth time, this time versus el Rayo de Jalisco junior, on Saturday, April 18, 1992, at la Arena Puebla in Puebla, Puebla, just outside Mexico City. This is Rayo's second chance at the belt; he lost once back around December 1st of last year. Also, the finals of the Naucalpan Weltwerweight tournament will be held Sunday, April 19, and the finalists are veteran Kundra and one of the best rookies of 1992, el Archangel de la Muerte (the regular pareja partner of Erick "el Canelo" Casas on CMLL undercards around the horn lately.)

TELEVISION RUNDOWN: UWA

1. From the show broadcast Saturday, February 29, 1992; taped Sunday, February 23, 1992, at el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos in Naucalpan, Mexico, Mexico:

1. Silver King, el Texano, and Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada drew in the third fall with Doctor Wagner junior, Jose "el Negro" Casas, and Rambo. This was a rematch from 2/15/92, a match I thought was the best UWA TV match I'd seen. This was good, but not that good. I've watched it twice and I still think the faces (Silver King's team) won cleanly, but the referees (el Bucles and el Fresero) let the third fall continue until there was a double pin at the 9:53 mark of the third fall. There was general confusion and they kind of lost the match in the third fall. The first two falls were dominated by the rudos, which generally makes for poorer quality and less spectacular matches. The heels won the first fall in 3:30 when Wagner pinned Hamada with the Tiger Driver and the faces won the second fall at 3:24 when the faces got Casas and Rambo to pin each other. What stood out in this match was just how good Negro Casas was—he has to be seen to be believed. He is legitimately one of the top ten wrestlers in the world, and considering that the Japanese don't use heels, has become the best heel in the world. It went 16:47 total, for ***.

2. La Muerte, el Tigre Canadiense, and The Killer (managed by Andy Barrow) defeated Enrique Vera, el Fantasma, and el Solar 1 two falls to zero in a total elapsed time of 12:23. The purpose of this match was to set up the mask (Muerte) versus hair (Vera) match the following week, which Vera won. The first fall went 6:20 before Muerte pinned Vera with a roundhouse punch. The faces won the second fall in 6:03 when Muerte pinned Vera with a punch using a chain wrapped around his right hand. La Muerte was, apparently, a legendary wrestler in the Monterrey, Guadalajara, and Guatemala circuits a while back. To show of how little use he is, the UWA let him go the day he dropped his mask and haven't asked him back since. In fact, he reminds me a lot of Black Bull in the LA area (i.e., he's horrible). Vera tried hard, even bleeding a lot, but this was hopeless. *.

3. Canek, Dos Caras, and Fishman defeated Bigelow, el Samoano I (Fatu), and el Samoano II (The Samoan Savage) two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 14:15. The first fall went only 3:10 before Bigelow pinned Canek clean with the running somersault drop, the same move Bam Bam had pinned Canek with in the third fall the week before. The second fall went 5:29 before Fishman pinned el Samoano II after a double drop kick. The third fall was an out of control 5:36 before Bigelow fouled Canek for the DQ. The fans were hot, too, about the finish, with some heavy booing and whistling. Canek pretty well pounded on Bigelow with several chair shots, a spinning leg lariat, and a body slam before Bigelow fouled in desperation. If that had been the first time they had used that script, it was executed so well, it would have sold out for a rematch. Now, however, the finish only keeps fans away. **.

2. The card broadcast Saturday, March 7, 1992, on Imevision, and taped Friday, February 28, 1992, at la Arena Netzahuacoyotl in Netzahualcoyotl, Mexico, Mexico:

1. Transformer (ex-Kendo) and el Celestial (ex-Blackman) defeated Ricky Boy and el Espanto junior two falls to one in a long 17:12. Transformer pinned Espanto in 7:35 with a sunset flip to win the first fall. Ricky Boy pinned Transformer in 3:27 with a diving body press to win the second. The third went 6:10 before el Celestial made el Espanto submit to a side Gori Especial (Argentinian backbreaker). Those of you who don't get to see el Espanto junior are really missing something; this guy is super—on a par with the very best. He's very small (as small as or smaller than The Blue Panther) so he works low on the cards (especially in the UWA). But his talent is large. He was the best thing about this match. Transformer has his set routines, as he displays in Japan, but he was working only at about 50% here (tell you anything when one of their most talented guys puts out only 50% at a TV taping?). And, sadly, Espanto and Transformer were barely in the ring together at all. Still, not a bad match, but a lot of time spent on it on TV. **.

2. Los Asesinos del Ring {Canek, Fishman, and The Killer (managed by Andy Barrow)} drew in the third fall with Enrique Vera, el Villano III, and el Villano IV in 14:50. Killer pinned Vera at 6:15 after a double-team driving elbow to win the first fall. El Villano III pinned Canek with the huracan rana to end the second fall at 3:50. And the third fall ended at 4:45 when Fishman and el Villano III were both pinned while doing a rolling reverse cradle (this is a standard finish for a draw in Mexico). The fans hated this finish too—at least they are letting the guys know they aren't happy with these non-finishes. This match meant nothing, too, and it wouldn't have hurt anybody to have Vera or Killer beat the other one. As far as work goes, the ones who stood out in this match were Canek (he almost always does, he's much better than I think a lot of people give him credit for in the ring) and Andy-Barrow-and-The-Killer. Those two have their double-team knock-the-manager-around spots down so well it's amazing. They did one timing spot in the second fall that may be the best, most-well-timed, most-intricate manager-bump spot I have ever seen. Barrow works real hard here and though he gets bumped a lot never puts himself over. On the whole, this match was slow (as usual with the UWA heavyweights) but watchable. ** (+ 1/2 for Canek, Killer, and Barrow).

3. The main event of the 2/28 card was a caballera contra caballera-and-career match with Tamba el Elefante Volador putting up his hair and career versus el Tigre Canadiense (Tamba lost). Inexplicably, that did not air on television and

This was silly because this match was taped on Friday, February 28, when los Villanos were UWA Trios champions. Two days later, they had a match of the same two teams and los Misioneros became champions. And this match was shown Saturday, March 7, after all of this had happened. So it didn't make much sense to me to either book this match or to show it. And, to boot, it wasn't a great match. It went 12:51 with los Villanos winning two falls to one. The first fall saw V-I pin Navarro in 5:26 with the huracan rana. The second fall saw Signo make V-I submit to a UWF/Japan-style arm-stretcher submission hold. The third fall went 5:35 before V-I pinned Signo with a quebradora (tilt-a-whirl-over-the-knee-back-breaker) and pinfall cover. They did their usual routines but without much life, especially from los Villanos. * 3/4.

3. The third and final UWA show to review this week comes from the show taped Friday, March 6, 1992, at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl (before a 2/3 house; capacity is 3,000) and shown Saturday, March 14, 1992, on Imevision:

1. The first match was the tercera of the evening, and saw tecnicos Katana (Leon Chino) and Kendo Star (not Kendo, I'm sure, but maybe a relative) defeat Casandro and el Angel Mortal two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 17:12. This is the most television time the UWA has given to any single bout of the 12 weeks I have reviewed their shows, and for two opening card teams! The first fall ended in 7:00 when Katana made Casandro submit to a front Gori Especial back breaker. The second went 3:41 before Casandro pinned Kendo Star with a diving body pres from off of the top rope. The third fall went 6:33 before both tecnicos did big dives out of the ring and made it back in before the count of twenty for a count out victory. Kendo Star did a super Lyger-type-dive over the top rope and Katana did an over the top rope plancha that nailed Casandro. Casandro was the best thing about this match, particularly in the first fall, doing his gay/kissing routines at a 5-star level. They dragged it out too long, though, but this is one of the rare UWA matches of late I can highly recommend. ***. Since the big Canek/Dos Caras match on 2/2, I have watched weeks of tapes, 15+ matches, and this is only the third I recommend. You can see the energy level and effort dropping almost regularly. It really looked like Katana didn't have his heart in it either, as he didn't follow through on a lot of moves on offense or defense; maybe he had already decided in his heart to pack it in.

2. Las Panteras Rosas {Los Villanos I, IV, and V} lost in three falls to Rambo, Baby Face, and Negro Casas in 12:52. This was not good at all except for one person—guess who? Actually Rambo was fine and is highly underrated, but Negro Casas is just out of this world. Still, los Villanos were the worst I have seen them tonight. The first fall went 5:46 before Rambo pinned V-I with the old Iceman King Parsons/Shiro Koshinaka butt buck. The second fall went just 2:44 before V-I rolled up Rambo into an enradadera (small package). The third went 4:22 before —surprise— a screw-job finish as Rambo fouled V-I and pinned him. Like I said, not good. * 1/2.

3. Mil Mascaras, Enrique Vera, and el Villano III defeated Fishman and The American Eagles I (Danny Davis) and II (Tony Anthony). This was not nearly so bad as I had feared (and why I feared it would be bad was only because of a style clash, nothing else). Mil sold only three spots all night, each one the same: a 3-on-1 advantage leads to Fishman clotheslining Mil out of the ring. Still, at age 50 (or is it 50+ Dave?) Mil is something special. With the possible exception of el Matematico I (and this is by reputation from the Japanese magazines) Mil may be the best active worker in the world over age 50 now. {Note: With Ric Flair, Jumbo Tsuruta, Rikid Choshu, and more between 40-44 and Perro Aguayo, Antonio Inoki, and others 45-49, I have to limit the age range that Mil is the best in.} This went 15:20; The first fall went 7:33 before V-III pinned Fishman with the huracan rana in the middle of a rowboat spot; the second went 4:50 before A-II pinned V-III with several punches; and Vera defeated Fishman in the third fall at the 2:57 mark via a leg stretcher submission hold. Very watchable, but nothing great. Davis and Anthony work hard and well, but it's all American style (well, mostly—Davis does receive some lucha libre armdrags).

* As far as the overall quality of the UWA show goes, I have these comments:

1. The announcing team of Alcatraz and Alfredo Ruiz is fine—not great but fine. They appear to be too "canned" as it is obvious their commentary is post produced.

2. The general crowd noise is very dull and they don't mike either the ring or the crowd well. This is my biggest complaint on the CMLL Galavision show too: it's the only TV show left where I can see the crowd getting excited but I can't hear them.

3. The number of cameras and their quality is CONSIDERABLY below that of CMLL, WWF, WCW, GWF, AJPW, AJWPW, and NJPW, which ranks it last among regular weekly TV shows available in the US, Mexico, or Japan major cities. This is the most glaring weakness. They need close-ups badly, but in tiny Arena Netzahualcoyotl, that is not likely to ever happen.

4. The rest of the show, with interviews and features, is fine, and a clear attempt to provide a different product from the straight match-match-match-match product of the CMLL.

5. They need very much to have their wrestlers put out harder on TV, and there need to be rhymes and reasons for the TV main events—they don't further any issues and with the TV effort I've seen, won't attract any fans for the work.

TITLE HISTORIES

Courtesy of Weekly Gong magazine (i.e., this is a blatant rip-off so nobody turn me in to the authorities, please) here are the histories of the Light Heavyweight Championships of the two largest promotions in Mexico—from beginning to end! Because there was no World Title to defend in Mexico (the NWA didn't send its champ down but rarely and the UWA didn't have a champion until 1978), the light heavyweights were traditionally the most important singles belts.

NWA

1. 11/30/1957, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Al Casey (who I believe is the very same Sheik Adnan el Kaissie) was crowned initial NWA World Light Heavyweight Champion.
2. 02/13/1959, in Mexico City, at la Arena Mexico, Dorrell "Dory" Dixon defeated Casey.
3. 09/11/1959, in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Rey Mendoza (Jorge Diaz) defeated Dixon
4. 07/30/1960, in Mexico City, at la Arena Mexico, Salvador "Gory" Guerrero defeated Mendoza.
5. Guerrero held the belt until 12/1966, when he retired. A tournament was held and Rey Mendoza emerged victorious on 08/04/1967 at la Arena Mexico in Mexico City.
6. 12/25/1968, in Torreon, Coahuila, el Angel Blanco (Jose "Ranchero" Vargas) defeated Mendoza.
7. 12/25/1968, at la Arena Mexico, in Mexico City, Mendoza regained the title, defeating Blanco (sorry about this being the same date as before, but that's what was reported).
8. 12/19/1969, at la Arena Mexico, in Mexico City, Carlos Elio "Coloso" Colisetti defeated Mendoza.
9. 03/20/1970, at la Arena Mexico, in Mexico City, Mendoza became a 4-time champion, defeating Colisetti.
10. 11/27/1970, el Solitario (Roberto Gonzalez Cruz) won the belt from Mendoza at la Arena Mexico in Mexico City.
11. 03/17/1972, David Morgan, from England, defeated Solitario at la Arena Mexico in Mexico City.
12. 04/21/1972, at la Arena Mexico, in Mexico City, Mendoza became a 5-time champion, defeating Morgan.
13. 06/13/1972, in Tijuana, Baja California Norte, Mexico, at el Auditorio Municipal, Alfonso Dantes (Jose Luis Amezcua Curiel) became champion by dethroning Mendoza.
14. 06/29/1973, at la Arena Mexico, in Mexico City, oriental star Kim Soon Hoh defeated Dantes.
15. 12/22/1973, Rey Mendoza won the belt for the 6th and final time, beating Hoh
16. Mendoza surrendered (was stripped of) the belt in July 1974, because he was upset at his push and left to form the UWA. On 9/22/1974, at the 41st anniversary of lucha libre card at la Arena Mexico, Doctor Wagner (Victor Manuel Gonzales Rivera) won a tournament to crown a new champion.
17. 02/27/1976, at la Arena Mexico in Mexico City, The Adorable Ruby won the belt.
18. 07/16/1976, Carlos Plata from Spain defeated Ruby at la Arena Mexico.
19. 10/24/1976, Alfonso Dantes regained the title from Plata in Guadalajara, Jalisco.
20. 02/11/1977, at the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles, Chavo Guerrero (Salvador Guerrero junior) became the son end of the first father and son NWA champions by defeating Dantes.
21. 04/21/1977, Dantes became a three-time champion by defeating Guerrero at la Arena Mexico.
22. 06/02/1978, el Faraon (Jose Luis Barajas Fernandez) defeated Dantes at la Arena Mexico.
23. 12/08/1978, at la Arena Mexico, Pak Choo (Kengo Kimura) defeated el Faraon.
24. 04/30/1979, Dantes became a 4-time champion by defeating Choo at la Arena Mexico.
25. 01/20/1980, Raul Mata won the title from Dantes in Guadalajara.
26. 02/15/1980, Mata must not have liked the belt because he had the shortest title reign up to that point in time (26 days) before losing back to Alfonso Dantes at la Arena Mexico.
27. 04/03/1981, Tony Salazar (who now wrestles as Ulises) won the title from Dantes at la Arena Mexico.
28. 03/22/1982, 10 years after he first won the belt, David Morgan returned to la Arena Mexico and beat Salazar.
29. 04/02/1982, Morgan had an even shorter reign than Mata, 10 days, before losing to Mascara Ano Dos Mil.

30. 11/16/1982, el Faraon regained the strap from Mascara Ano Dos Mil at la Arena Mexico in Mexico City.
31. 01/15/1983, Ringo Mendoza (Pedro Jacobo Genaro Contreras) defeated el Faraon in Guadalajara, Jalisco
32. 07/28/1983, 9 years after his debut as a welterweight, el Satanico (Jose Daniel Lopez Lopez) won the title for the first time, defeating Mendoza at la Arena Mexico in Mexico City.
33. 10/23/1983, Mendoza gained revenge on Satanico back in Guadalajara.
34. 02/13/1985, M. S. 1 (Pablo Fuentes Reyna) ended Mendoza's 15 1/2-month reign at la Arena Coliseo de Acapulco in Acapulco, Guerrero.
35. 06/21/1985, at la Arena Mexico, el Rayo de Jalisco junior (Maximino Linares junior) won the belt for the first time from M. S. 1.
36. 03/20/1987, M. S. 1 won the belt back in at la Arena Mexico.
37. 06/24/1987, at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl in Netzahualcoyotl, Mexico, Cien Caras (Carmelo Reyes Gonzales) succeeded his younger brother (Mascara Ano Dos Mil) as champion by defeating M. S. 1.
38. 03/20/1988, Lizmark (Juan Banos) set history when he beat Caras at la Arena Mexico, as Lizmark became the only wrestler to ever hold all three Mexico NWA belts (Welterweight, Middleweight, and Light Heavyweight).
39. 06/24/1988, Fabuloso Blondy (Ken Timbs) became the first American citizen (I believe) to hold this title by defeating Lizmark at la Arena Mexico.
40. 12/09/1988, Lizmark regained the belt from Blondy at la Arena Mexico.
41. 07/21/1989, el Satanico defeated Lizmark for his 2nd title at la Arena Mexico.
42. 10/21/1989, el Pirata Morgan (Francisco Ortiz Villanueva) defeated el Satanico (and today they are tag team trio partners) for the title at la Arena Isabel in Cuernavaca, Morelos.
43. 02/14/1990, Fabuloso Blondy regained the title from el Pirata Morgan at la Arena Mexico.
44. 03/21/1990, Lizmark defeated Blondy at la Arena Coliseo de Acapulco in Lizmark's hometown of Acapulco, Guerrero.
45. 11/26/1990, el Satanico defeated Lizmark for the title at la Arena Isabel in Leon, Guanajuato.
46. 05/01/1991, Lizmark became a 4-time champion by defeating el Satanico at la Arena Coliseo de Acapulco.
47. 04/05/1992, el Satanico also became a 4-time champion at la Arena Mexico by defeating Lizmark.

CMLL

1. 09/26/1991, Jerry Estrada won a tournament final over Pierroth junior in Pierroth's home town of Cuernavaca, Morelos, at la Arena Isabel.
2. 03/19/1992, at the same la Arena Isabel, Pierroth junior became the second champion by defeating Jerry Estrada.

UWA

1. 11/25/1975, Rey Mendoza (6-time NWA champ) won a tournament final to crown the initial champion at Mexico City's most glamorous arena, el Palacio de los Deportes.
2. 03/21/1976, el Audaz defeated Mendoza in Veracruz, Veracruz.
3. 08/22/1976, Mendoza won the belt back from el Audaz at Monterrey, Nuevo Leon.
4. 03/24/1977, el Solitario defeated Mendoza in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua.
5. 10/29/1978, Rey Mendoza won his ninth (6 NWA, 3 UWA) and final World Light Heavyweight title from el Solitario at el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos in Naucalpan, Mexico, Mexico.
6. 11/04/1979, Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada defeated Mendoza at el Toreo, 20+ years after Ray won his 1st L. H. belt.
7. 05/25/1980, Pedro "el Perro" Aguayo (Pedro Aguayo Damian) defeated Hamada at el Toreo.
8. 12/12/1980, Fishman defeated Aguayo at el Toreo.
9. 03/01/1981, Rey Mendoza's son, Arturo Diaz, wrestling as el Villano III, defeated Fishman at el Toreo.

10. 07/19/1981, Fishman regained the belt from el Villano III at el Toreo.
11. 11/12/1982, Sangre CHicana (Andres Richardson Reyna) ended Fishman's second reign at el Toreo.
12. 02/27/1983, at el Toreo, Fishman defeated CHicana for a third title win.
13. 10/09/1983, CHicana regained the belt from Fishman at el Toreo.
14. 08/22/1984, tag you're it—Fishman regains the belt at el Toreo for a 4th title reign.
15. 08/10/1986, el Villano I (Jorge Diaz junior) joined his father and younger brother as UWA champ at el Toreo by defeating Fishman.
16. 01/17/1987, el Loco Zandokan upset el Villano I at el Toreo to win this title.
17. 04/02/1989, at la Arena Mexico of all places, el Gran Hamada won his second title over el Loco Zandokan.
18. 02/07/1991, el Signo (Antonio Sanchez) defeated Hamada at la Pista Arena Revolucion to become the first wrestler ever to win world titles at four weight classes (Light Heavyweight, Middleweight, Welterweight, and Lightweight).
19. 05/16/1991, el Villano III began a second title reign by defeating Signo at la Pista Arena Revolucion.
20. 10/31/1991, el Signo regained the title from el Villano III at la Pista Arena Revolucion.
21. 04/03/1992, at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl, el Villano V became the 4th of the 6 family members who have ever wrestled to hold this title by defeating el Signo. Only the late el Villano II (q.e.p.d.) and el Villano IV have not won this title within the Mendoza family.

CHAMPIONS REPORT: (Lucha Libre Champions as of 4/22/92)

Heavyweight: UWA: Dos Caras; CMLL: Cien Caras; National: el Egipcio; WWA, IWA, and ALLL: Mil Mascaras; LAWA: Konnan el Barbaro.

Light-Heavyweight: UWA: el Villano V; WWF: The Pegasus Kid; CMLL: Pierroth junior; NWA: Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon; National: la Mascara Sagrada; WWA: Lizmark; NWA Intercontinental: el Faraon; Distrito Federal: el Indomito

Junior Heavyweight: UWA: The Killer; WWA: el Villano IV.

Junior Light Heavyweight: UWA: Vacant

Cruiserweight: National: el Destructor de Idolos

Middleweight: UWA: Jose "el Negro" Casas; WWA: Vacant; NWA: Atlantis; CMLL: The Blue Panther; National: Octagon; UWA/UWF Super Middle: (Super) Atomo.

Welterweight: UWA: el Hijo del Santo; WWA: Vacant; CMLL: America; National: Ciclón Ramirez; NWA: el Misterioso

Lightweight: UWA: Lasser; National: Flash; WWA: el Hijo de Black Shadow

Featherweight: UWA: Bird Boy I; National: el Hijo.

Flyweight: National: el Rayo de Oro.

Luchadoras: UWA: Zuleyma; National: Neftali; WWA: la Monsther; UWA/JWP Junior: Cutie Suzuki; WWF: Brandi Mae; Distrito Federal; la Diabolica; la Arena Aragon: Selene

Parejas: UWA, WWA, and WWF Intercontinental: los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano); National: el Misterioso and el Volador; UWF and UWA Intercontinental: Akiyoshi and Takayama (Punish and Crush); National Women's: la Pantera Surena and Martha "la Aplandora" Villalobos

Trios: UWA: Los Nuevos Misioneros de la Muerte (The Black Power II, el Signo, and Miguel "el Negro" Navarro); WWA: la Aguila del America, Ultraman Dos Mil, and (Super) Kiss; CMLL: los Intocables del Ring (Masakre, Jaque Mate, and Pierroth junior); National: los Hermanos Dinamita (Cien Caras, Mascara Ano Dos Mil, and Universo 2000).

Super-Mini-Estrellas: CMLL: la Mascarita Sagrada

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